



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING



ISMAEL AHMED
DIRECTOR

December 16, 2008

The Honorable Bill Hardiman, Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
915 Farnum Building
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

The Honorable Dudley Spade, Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
House Office Building, Room N0993
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7514

Dear Senator Hardiman and Representative Spade:

Section 687 of 2008 PA 248 requires the Department of Human Services to convene a work group to review the current status of the child and adult care food program for at-risk school children and make recommendations for maximizing participation in the child and adult care food program for at-risk school children. Our report is attached.

The attached report contains the following information:

- (a) Barriers impeding greater participation in the child and adult care food program for at-risk school age children.
- (b) Strategies to address these barriers.
- (c) Plans and recommendations to increase participation in child and adult care food program for at-risk school children.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact James B. Gale, director of the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing, at (517) 241-5462.

Sincerely,

Ismael Ahmed

cc: Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittees on DHS
Senate and House Fiscal Agencies
Senate and House Policy Offices
State Budget Director

**Report on the Status of the
Child and Adult Care Food Program
For At-Risk School Children**

(a) Barriers impeding greater participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) afterschool snack/supper program in at-risk areas:

- Lack of an effective strategy to distribute information to potential food program participants.
- Perception from potential participants that there is too much paperwork required to make participation in the food program worth the time investment.

(b) Michigan Department of Education (MDE) data indicates that the total number of sites serving snacks and suppers in at-risk areas in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) has nearly doubled since fiscal year 2006. MDE credits the increased utilization of the CACFP with recent improvements in communication strategies with state organizations and outside stakeholders. These strategies include:

- MDE has developed an informational document explaining CACFP that can be easily distributed.
- The MDE superintendent sends a letter every year to all local school district superintendents about the importance of CACFP. This notification is also sent to charter schools.
- MDE staff has recently begun to focus on community outreach efforts such as presenting a workshop at the 21st Century Community Learning Center grantee program “kick off” in August 2008.
- MDE has added the CACFP phone number to the Department of Human Services (DHS) subsidy payment stubs.
- MDE has revised the CACFP website to present information more clearly and to make navigation on the site easier.
- MDE has issued a press release the past two years through their public relations department to generate interest in the program.

Within the DHS, the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing (BCAL) has further fostered the promotion of CACFP through:

- Coordinating with MDE in the development of a screening tool to better identify CACFP program participants and applicants that do not require licensure.
- Coordinating directly with the Mayor’s Time program in the metro Detroit area to promote greater participation in the CACFP.

(c) The work group has identified the following recommendations to promote maximum utilization of the CACFP on a statewide basis:

- MDE should continue to work toward the target of fiscal year 2010 to amend the school lunch application so that schools can use a simplified, amended application to participate in the after school snack and supper program.
- MDE should increase support and communication with both current and potential CACFP sponsors.

- MDE should continue the implementation of its outreach plan to public and privately funded organizations, including private schools, religious organizations, and nonprofit organizations. Continued outreach activities include:
 - Education and annual notification to all school superintendents, other school leaders, and charter schools regarding the CACFP.
 - Outreach efforts to community organizations, such as the United Way, to promote the CACFP.
 - Continue to coordinate with CACFP sponsors to identify and resolve problematic issues.
- MDE should expand its outreach plan to include:
 - Coordination with MDE Supplemental Educational Services (SES) to provide snacks and meals as part of their tutoring, small group, or instruction provided before or after school, on weekends, or during the summer.
 - Further clarification of eligibility criteria on CACFP website.
- The Early Childhood Investment Corporation should distribute information on CACFP to local Great Start Collaboratives.
- MDHS, Michigan Department of Community Health, and other state departments and agencies should promote and distribute CACFP information at a wide range of workshops, trainings, and conferences.

Work Group Members:

James Sinnamon, Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing
 Donald Vita, Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing
 Fidelia Notman, Child Development and Care
 Lindy Buch, Michigan Dept. of Education, Early Childhood and Family Services
 Marla Moss, Michigan Dept. of Education, Child and Adult Care Food Program
 Rosemary Suardini, Michigan Dept. of Education, Child and Adult Care Food Program
 Jeremy Reuter, Michigan Head Start State Coordinator
 Terri Stangl, Center for Civil Justice